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ABSTRACT

This publication presents results of a four part study done of Roman Catholic seminary faculty and their recruitment and retention as well as historical background and extensive commentary. The study developed four surveys for seminary faculty, bishops, religious superiors, and seminary administrators, respectively. Of the instruments mailed to the selected populations, 235 faculty, 128 bishops, 121 religious superiors, and 38 administrators responded. A commentary section in two parts offers, first, the reflections of Robert J. Wister on the past and recent past of seminary establishment and administration as well as the transitions taking place in the last few decades and suggestions for the future and, second, the comments of Katarina Schuth on the working conditions at seminaries now and in the future. An executive summary of the study results offer profiles of the respondents and their responses. Further sections offer more detailed analysis of the study of the seminary faculty (profile of respondents, answers to an openended section of the survey, and the instrument and raw data), the studies of the bishops and religious superiors, and the study of seminary administrators' experiences hiring faculty. (JB)

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The Recruitment & Retention of Faculty

In Roman Catholic Theological Seminaries

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A STUDY CONDUCTED BY
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NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION
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Introduction

Seminaries and their faculties are changing rapidly. Some of the more important changes are:

- We have approximately one-half the seminaries we had in 1966.
- Seminaries have introduced field education and/or internship years to bolster the practical training for the priesthood. Formation has improved considerably. These improvements have likewise added to faculty responsibilities.
- Today's seminarian is less homogeneous in culture, age and talents. This often requires extensive adaptations.
- Fewer students, buildings in need of renovation, and an increase in lay faculty have caused costs to increase.
- The decreasing number of priests has shrunk the available pool of possible faculty members.

These and other circumstances point to a seminary system very unlike the system that existed two or three decades before. To respond to these challenges this study examines the key variables that will influence the recruiting of future faculty.

Thanks to a grant from Lilly Endowment, the National Catholic Educational Association, with the assistance of Fr. Eugene Hemrick of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, undertook a study of seminary faculty with a view to its future.

On April 28-29, 1990, a committee was convened to develop survey instruments for the study of recruitment and retention of seminary faculty. Three instruments were envisioned: one for seminary faculty, a second for the bishops of the U.S., and a third for religious superiors. A fourth instrument surveying the experience of seminary administrators was subsequently determined to be needed.

In attendance at that first meeting were: Revs. Gerald Brown, SS, John Lodge, Thomas Daly, Eugene Hemrick, Robert Wister, Sr. Katarina Schuth, OSF, and Dr. Dean Hoge. The committee provided input on what should be included in the instruments. They raised questions on how present faculty members feel about the academic standards, moral support of the institution and quality of students.

How do they feel about being able to recruit faculty in the future, and what might be attractive for someone considering this position? What improvements need to be made to insure healthy growth among faculty, seminary and seminarians?

A second meeting was held in Washington September 15, 1990 to examine a first draft of the instrument. Many helpful improvements were added to sharpen questions and to explore the issues better. Attending the meeting were: Elden Curtiss, Bishop of Helena, Revs. Gerald Brown, SS, Thomas Daly, John Lodge, Robert Wister, James Coriden, Sr. Agnes Cunningham, Sr. Katarina Schuth, OSF, and Dr. Dean Hoge. After the second draft was designed, it was pre-tested among faculty and bishops, and then revised before mailing.

In the Winter of 1991 a list of seminary faculty was developed by writing each seminary for the names of their faculty. Once compiled, the list was compared with a list compiled by Sr. Katarina Schuth, OSF. The list was corrected as was necessary and consisted of 490 faculty members. Sr. Katarina also assisted in the development of the instrument used to survey the recruiting experiences of seminary administrators.

In the Spring of 1991 the 490 questionnaires were mailed to the faculty and 235 were returned making a 47% return.

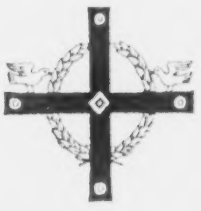
One hundred eighty-five questionnaires were sent to the bishops and 128 were returned making a 69% return.

Two hundred sixty-seven were sent to religious superiors and 121 returned making a 45% return.

In the Winter of 1991 the administrators of 56 theologates were surveyed and 38 or 68% responded.

We are pleased to present the results of these four surveys and commentary on the findings.

Rev. Eugene Hemrick
Office of Research
USCC/NCCB



Commentary

Recruitment and Retention of Seminary Faculty

This study gives us a new understanding of one of the major developments which have taken place in Catholic seminaries from the particular perspectives of faculty, administration, bishops and religious superiors.

In recent years seminary administration have reported increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining faculty. Seminary rectors noted that it was especially difficult to find qualified priest faculty. This study approaches the question of recruitment and retention of seminary faculty from three perspectives. First, it provides a profile of the current seminary faculty together with the faculty members' evaluation of the environmental factors which assist them or hamper them in their task. It also asks them to reflect on their commitment to seminary formation and on the future challenges to recruiting faculty and maintaining the quality of seminary training. Second, it asks the bishops and religious superiors how they view their role in contributing to the staffing of seminaries. They too are asked to reflect on the future of seminaries, in particular with reference to maintaining a significant presence of priests in seminary formation. The third and final piece of the study contains the reflections of seminary administrators on their recent experience in hiring faculty.

This study gives us a new understanding of one of the major developments which have taken place in Catholic seminaries from the particular perspectives of faculty, administration, bishops and religious superiors. It shows that very significant changes have taken place. In order to put this study in perspective, I would like to reflect on the past, the present and the future of the faculties of our Catholic seminaries.

The Not So Distant Past

While the foundation of these seminaries was in many ways haphazard, in fact entrepreneurial in some cases, the majority benefitted from a system in place within the church.

Joseph White in his *History of Diocesan Seminaries in the United States* demonstrates the great variety of diocesan seminary foundations. They were founded through the initiative of an individual bishop such as Bayley in Newark, by Sulpicians or Vincentians dedicated to seminary education, by monasteries as their particular apostolate such as St. Meinrad, by groups of priests as in Emmitsburgh, or even by an individual priest like Father Jessing of the Josephinum. Not researched by White, a very significant number of seminaries were founded by religious institutes exclusively for the training of their own members. The Jesuit seminary in Weston and the Dominican House of Studies in Washington would just begin a long list.

All were founded in response to perceived pastoral needs to educate seminarians of a diocese, a region, an ethnic group or a religious institute. Naturally, the seminaries were established where the Catholic population was greatest. Thus the majority of the seminaries are still in the northeast and the midwest. The growth of the Catholic population in other areas of the United states took place while seminary enrollment was declining and so these areas do not have local seminaries in proportion to their Catholic populations.

While the foundation of these seminaries was in many ways haphazard, in fact entrepreneurial in some cases, the majority benefitted from a system in place within the church. They followed a course of study and a basic philosophy of education and formation which evolved from the Council of Trent for the diocesans and from the particular religious institutes for their own members. Diocesan seminarians and no one else went to seminaries established for them, Jesuits and no one else went to Jesuit seminaries, Franciscans went to their seminaries and so on.

In a recent presentation to the Midwest Association of Theological Schools, Msgr. William Baumgaertner stated that "the relation of the seminary to the church has changed dramatically." (*Seminary News*, "The Theological School and the Local Church," Dec 1991, v30, n2, 8-14). Baumgaertner noted that the seminary in previous years could depend on the ordinary, bishop or religious, for faculty, students and finances. The changes which have taken place are such that the former system, similar in most institutions despite their apparent diversity, no longer serves. In particular, these changes have affected faculty, their recruitment and retention. They have not been deliberately planned but are rather the result of an evolution caused by theological and social developments in our church and our nation.

Thirty years ago, when the need arose, a bishop responsible for a seminary could choose a priest for graduate studies and assign him to the seminary. Available to him were a number of newly or recently ordained men who had already completed licentiate degrees at Innsbruck, Louvain, Washington or Rome as well as talented priests from local seminaries. Normally those selected would then obtain their doctorates from ecclesiastical faculties or universities. Sometimes they would work in a field of their own choosing. Sometimes they would not. These studies could be undertaken and completed at relatively modest cost. Some dioceses educated more priests than they required for immediate needs. In the archdiocese of Philadelphia there were often a number of priests with doctoral degrees teaching in the archdiocesan high schools. They were the "reserves on the bench" who could eventually be called upon to staff the seminary. Religious communities dedicated to education attracted candidates who entered because of an attraction to studies. Their ordinaries had an even larger pool from which to select their seminary professors. A number of orders had their own system of higher education in which their priests could matriculate without causing a severe economic burden.

The diocesan priest assigned to a seminary would normally expect to spend many of his years living and teaching in the seminary to which he was assigned. Quite a few would spend all their lives. Eventually, some would "take a parish" when their name came up on the seniority list. Similarly, religious assigned to a seminary or house of studies would normally devote the greater part of their lives to this calling, living in and a part of the community in which they taught.

Theology and seminaries were practically coextensive in the Roman Catholic tradition in our country. Theology was a clerical preserve and was limited to seminaries and certain ecclesiastical universities. In this period, priests attracted to theological studies had only one place in which to pursue an academic career in theology.

Other important seminary posts were filled with comparative ease. In choosing a spiritual director, academic credentials would take second place to finding a man of spiritual insight and profound wisdom. Quite often, a pastor or local superior of high repute would be selected. The appointment of a rector usually required a man of high standing and administrative ability, but not necessarily an academic or a man with seminary experience. The office of academic dean was normally a part-time position which dealt mostly with scheduling. Other programs as well could be run on a part-time basis and few required collaboration with others outside of the seminary.

The Transition

During the last three decades the pool of priests, diocesan and religious, became smaller.

Bishops and religious ordinaries were under pressure to fill other assignments in parishes and community apostolates. A number of priests teaching in seminaries resigned from the ministry. It became more difficult to find suitable candidates for higher studies from this shrinking pool. Of these, many were not willing to accept assignments to teach in seminaries. Simultaneously, theology as an academic discipline quickly spread from the seminary and entered the mainstream of university studies, Catholic and non-Catholic. There were more and different options for priests who felt an attraction and a call to theological studies. For a variety of reasons, some priests in seminaries found the university more attractive and left seminary teaching for posts in colleges and universities.

Most significantly, the number of seminarians declined precipitously. Responding to these changes, many religious communities joined forces to pool resources and to form theological unions and consortia. This pooling of resources, combined with the closing of some diocesan seminaries, allowed seminaries a "breathing space" to fill posts with trained, proven, experienced and excellent priests. Alas, the passage of time has seen many of these fine teachers pass into retirement. We will not find a similar "bonanza" of teachers again.

Spiritual direction gradually became more complex and directors were expected to have advanced training in spirituality and other disciplines. Personal development and formation programs also required staff trained in psychology and related fields. The faculty soon required not only professors trained in the traditional academic disciplines but also others trained in spirituality, psychology, social sciences and communications.

Seminary administration has also been transformed. Rectors began to assume the additional responsibilities of development, fundraising and public relations, to name a few. Academic deans moved from simply scheduling classes to overseeing the professional quality of the program and the faculty, encouraging faculty development and dealing with outside accrediting and governmental agencies. Deans of men became directors of formation overseeing complex programs far removed from the simple enforcing of a rule.

Professionalization, specialization and bureaucratization have, like it or not, become part and parcel of the seminary world as they have long been a part of the world in which we live. The maintenance of quality in Catholic seminaries requires a highly trained staff not only of professors but also of administrators, spiritual directors and program directors.

The Present

While 30 years ago almost all seminary faculty were priests, today one out of four is a religious woman, lay woman, lay man or brother (Faculty Profile, Figure 1, Question 1).

This is a significant change from the not so distant past when a lay person or a religious woman was truly a *rara avis* on a seminary faculty. In 1967 when Sister Agnes Cunningham joined the faculty of Mundelein Seminary, she became the first woman to be a full time professor in a Catholic seminary. While the lack of qualified priests may have prompted or initiated the hiring of lay faculty in some cases, the call of Vatican II for more lay involvement in all areas of church life was a major force in this development. Today this group is an important and integral part of seminary life. Their presence stimulates questions which must be addressed. The proportion of priests on a faculty, the intersection of academic and formational roles, financial and professional support for faculty are but a few. These questions are not restricted to lay faculty and are equally significant for religious women and for priests, diocesan and religious.

The composition of seminary faculties continues to change. Diocesan institutions which once drew their professors from the presbyterate of one diocese now include priests from other dioceses, religious men and women and laity. The theological unions continue to develop more diverse faculties, including members of non-participating communities, diocesan priests, religious women and laity. If the number of qualified priests does not increase, we can expect this trend toward more mixed faculties to continue.

An overarching issue is the proper proportion of priests on a seminary faculty. The majority of bishops, religious superiors and faculty believe that a significant presence of priests is necessary (Faculty Profile, Bishops and Religious Superiors Survey, Open-ended Responses). Common sense also indicates this. However, it is difficult to imagine that it will be possible to maintain the current proportion. The proper proportion of ordained and lay faculty will continue to be an issue. It appears that there will be fewer qualified priests to fill faculty roles and therefore the proportion of lay faculty will increase. This need for a sufficient proportion of priest faculty, important as it is, should not be allowed to become an occasion to lower esteem for the contribution of all faculty but rather an opportunity to reflect on the unity of purpose of the entire faculty. For the health of the institution the lay faculty will require moral support and affirmation as well as financial support.

The theology of ministry, the question of lay roles, the issue of collaboration also affect faculty diversity. Some may view diversity with alarm as damaging to a proper understanding of priesthood and priestly training and consider lay faculty as provisional until they can be replaced by priests. Others view diversity as a proper expression of a collaborative approach to ministry in ministerial training.

Today's faculty, ordained and lay, is professionally well-qualified, almost three out of five possessing doctoral degrees (Faculty Profile, Table 2, Question 4). The significant proportion (18%) with degrees in the social sciences reflects the importance given to these fields today as well as the increasing professionalization of those faculty in specifically formational roles. More and more, professional credentials will require professional salaries. When a person is hired "degree in hand" that person expects compensation which will reimburse him/her or the diocese or order for educational expenses. If relocation is required, a certain degree of job security is a reasonable expectation. This is obviously necessary for lay faculty who may have a family to support. No less is it required for religious who bear the burden of supporting retired members of their communities and who must reimburse the community for their education. Diocesan priests as well need support to maintain their status as participants in the professional realm of the academy. The hiring process, which has left the area of simple assignment, will force this issue even more as appointments are more frequently negotiated. Although most of their predecessors of three decades ago were assigned to their work, only one out of five of today's faculty were assigned by superiors or bishops (Faculty Profile, Question 9). They either were asked to consider the position or sought the position. The system of replacing faculty by assignment has changed radically for a variety of reasons. The pool is smaller, many priests are unwilling to accept assignment to graduate studies or to seminary work, many bishops feel constrained from releasing priests due to the need to staff parishes. Seminaries now seek faculty members outside of their traditional bases and traditional personnel. It is not unusual to see advertisements for seminary professors in *America*, *NCR* and *Openings*, the job hunting journal of the American Academy of Religion.

Thirty years ago, with few exceptions, the seminary faculty resided at the seminary. Today, only 48% of the professors reside at the seminary, 13% reside at houses of formation, 39% live elsewhere (Faculty Profile, Question 8). This is a significant change. It reflects the structure of the theological unions as well as the addition of laity and religious to diocesan seminaries and the separation of formation and academic faculties at the theological unions and at many other seminaries. In most cases, this change has placed more responsibilities on those faculty who perform both formational and academic tasks.

The Future

It is encouraging to verify that Catholic seminaries are served by highly qualified dedicated personnel, the majority of whom feel supported, satisfied and affirmed by their work.

It is heartening to learn that almost three out of four find that seminary work is fulfilling (Faculty Profile, Table 5, Question 10). Similar numbers feel that they receive good or excellent moral support from peers, administrators and students (Faculty profile, Table 6).

Less encouraging is the prospect of maintaining this level of support, satisfaction and affirmation. While academic resources and faculty morale are rated positively, more than half believe their institutions rate poorly in producing scholarly publications (Faculty Profile, Question 18) and 26% believe their opportunities for research are inadequate (Faculty Profile, Question 42). In a variety of important areas, ranging from evaluation of the physical condition of the seminary to moral support from the seminary administration, a significant minority of 25% do not feel supported, satisfied and affirmed (Faculty Profile, Questions 10, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21). While only one-fourth of the seminaries offer tenure, almost half of the faculty believe it should be offered (Faculty Profile, Questions 24, 25,). Interestingly, while 89% of the faculty reported that their seminaries have a sabbatical policy, only 43% of faculty have taken advantage of a sabbatical (Faculty Profile, Questions 32, 33).

The faculty also tell us that 14% plan to leave seminaries in the near future, 28% in a few years (Faculty Profile, Question 51). Although this will result from a combination of factors including retirement, it means that by the turn of the century or shortly thereafter it will be necessary to replace more than 40% of the seminary faculty members. The number of recent searches (142 over the last two years, Experience Survey, Table 1) confirms this trend. This is a daunting prospect. Such issues make personnel and financial planning and development crucial issues for seminaries.

Graduate education today is very expensive. It is no longer possible to obtain a terminal degree at a modest cost. A doctorate takes three to five years or longer to complete. In some disciplines and at some institutions it is even longer. Today annual expenses of room, board and tuition range from $15,000 to $20,000 or more. For religious and diocesans assigned to studies, salary, benefits and retirement contributions can add an additional $15,000 to $20,000

per year. The attainment of a doctoral degree therefore costs from one hundred to several hundred thousand dollars, unless scholarship aid is obtained.

Recruiting needs and patterns will also reflect the changed composition of the student body. This study also showed that only one out of 20 faculty are of Hispanic, Asian or African heritage (Faculty profile, Question 3a). Identification with role models and mentors is important in all forms of education, and seminary education is no exception. The increasing number of seminarians from non-European heritages make the recruiting of seminary personnel from all of these groups essential.

Rev. Howard Bleichner, SS, sums up the prospects of the future very well. "The pool of priests who have advanced degrees in the sacred sciences is shrinking. No reversal of that trend is in sight. Uncomfortable alternatives loom: either the priest faculty is maintained but with lower professional credentials, or the advanced degree becomes the determining factor, realizing that the presence of priests teaching in seminaries will dwindle accordingly." (*Seminary News*, "2001: A Seminary Oddysey," Dec 1991, v30, n2, 23-26). Each alternative is equally unattractive. Our study indicates that the seminaries are taking the second path, considering professional competence paramount, (Experience Survey, Table 2) with an inevitable decline in the number of ordained faculty.

Rectors and deans testify to the difficulty of finding qualified priest professors. A significant number expressed frustration in recruitment. Quite often the person hired did not possess the qualifications they wished, in other instances the position was left unfilled or filled by adjuncts (Experience Survey, Table 3). Interestingly, a surprising number replied that they were not always seeking priests for faculty positions (Experience Survey, Table 3). Some indicated that they were specifically seeking women for positions so that the faculty would have balance and model collaboration. In other instances, they no longer sought priests out of frustration from the lack of qualified applicants or having qualified applicants whose ordinaries would not release them (Experience Survey, Open-ended responses).

The responding seminary administrators, rectors and academic deans, have sought 103 replacements for departing faculty and have initiated searches for 39 new positions over a two year period. Since there are approximately 500 faculty members in the seminaries included in this study, this represents a turnover of more than ten percent per year and an addition of 20 new positions per year. Only 28 of these searches specifically sought a diocesan priest and 15 a religious priest. In 34 instances, although a priest would be preferred, ordination status was not considered in the final decision and 38 searches were open to all. Sixty-four of the searches resulted in finding a candidate with the qualifications desired. Seventeen settled on a person without the desired qualifications. In 22 instances, adjuncts were hired or other steps taken to fill the need (Experience Survey, Table 2).

Our open-ended replies show that some priests turn down graduate studies because they are happy in parish work. For the same reason some professors

leave seminaries to return to parish ministry. In particularly sensitive areas such as moral theology, anecdotal information indicated that many priests are reluctant to pursue graduate studies lest they become "lightning rods" in many controversies. However, most searches in this area were successful (Experience Survey, Table 4), although in this field, like others, the ordination status of the applicant was not considered essential. Liturgy and sacramental theology seem particularly difficult recruiting areas as well. It seems that few priests have pursued studies in this important field in recent years.

Quite a few rectors and deans wrote that often a bishop would refuse to release a priest for their faculty. However, only four instances of a bishop's refusal are cited as frustrating a search (Experience Survey, Table 4). This may reflect the practice of a seminary seeking a bishop's permission before asking a priest to serve on their faculty or a priest requesting his bishop's permission to apply for a particular post. The process can thereby be ended before it begins.

The responses of seminary officers regarding departing faculty reflect the continuing pattern of retirement, seeking parish assignments, leaving the priesthood and moving to university posts (Experience Survey, Open-ended responses).

Planning

In response to this survey's open-ended questions concerning the future of seminaries, a very large number of seminary faculty and bishops called for national planning, consolidation of institutions, the creation of pools of priest faculty and other strategies.

This demonstrates that a large number of those intimately concerned with the future of seminaries believe that some form of regional or national planning is necessary to ensure the future of seminaries. Some bishops say they would be more inclined to release priests if they felt seminary and personnel resources were better utilized.

In 1973, the Congregation for Catholic Education encouraged the American bishops to consider consolidation of seminaries and seminary resources. A number of attempts took place to achieve this. The religious orders for the most part embraced the concept. Decreasing enrollment and skyrocketing costs were major forces which led to the closing of many religious order seminaries and the establishment of theological unions and consortia. The concept of collaboration, ecumenical cooperation and preparation for nonordained ministry also encouraged moves in this direction.

The cost of maintaining seminaries continues to increase. Some seminaries receive financial support from urban dioceses which are facing severe fiscal problems. The allocation of dwindling financial resources is a sensitive but crucial problem.

Diocesan institutions did not move in the same direction as religious. There was some discussion of consolidation at the First Assembly of Rectors and Ordinaries in 1982 in Mundelein but there was no further progress in this direction. Any such discussion raises understandable concerns the most basic of which is "whose place will close and whose place will stay open."

It is not clear what form such planning should take. Some things are clear. The maintenance of an existing seminary is a source of pride for a local church. It is also a center for theological vitality, for the training of deacons, ecclesial ministers, catechists and others. A bishop, for a variety of sound reasons, would be very hesitant to allow such a resource to disappear from his diocese. He would be concerned that the local church would be impoverished from a variety of aspects by such a loss. It is possible to admit lay students to provide a critical mass of students and provide theological education for other ministries. However, if the number of seminarians declines the question arises whether the specificity of priestly training is maintained.

The need for planning is critical. But first is the need to recognize that the situation is much different from that of the past. The relationships have changed among dioceses, seminaries, faculties and the church at large, just as the relationships among the powers of the world have shifted. It appears from a variety of studies that the number of priests will continue to decline in the foreseeable future. Bishops will be under increasing pressure not to release qualified men for graduate studies, lest they be "lost" to the diocese. Also, if a man is released, who will pay for the increasing cost of his doctoral studies. If seminary staffs are overstretched, will the qualified priests be inclined to go to the seminaries?

Those surveyed appeared to concur that a proportion of the seminary professors should be priests. What that proportion is exactly is less clear. Where those priest professors will come from is equally obscure. How they will be recruited and how their education will be funded are additional questions which remain unanswered. The seminaries' policy of recruiting through various search mechanisms shows that the diocese or religious sponsor can no longer provide them.

A number of bishops suggested that a pool of qualified priest professors be identified and supported. Though fewer in numbers than in years past, it is not illogical to believe that there are untapped priests interested in graduate study and in seminary work. Perhaps a national plan could include a process to identify potential seminary personnel, connect them with an institution which needs their skills and arrange a method of funding graduate education on a contractual basis requiring a number of years of service to the sponsoring institution. Planning could also encourage regional cooperation among institutions such as faculty exchange and perhaps sharing integration of some facilities such as libraries as is done by the consortia. Planning should also include strategies to encourage long term commitment to the seminaries. The expenses involved in educating potential personnel are much more efficiently utilized if the person spends more rather than less time engaged in the seminary apostolate. The continuity of the faculty and administration also helps to ensure the maintenance of quality in the institution. Such recruiting will be in vain if, after a few years, faculty find the seminary an uncongenial place and seek other teaching assignments or a return to other forms of ministry.

Planning should involve other interested constituencies. A number of seminaries have established relationships of varying degrees of affiliation with Catholic universities. Several are presently investigating such affiliation. They can provide savings in library and other expenses and lead to mutually beneficial sharing of facilities and faculties. But they change the modus operandi of the institution, make no mistake about it.

Our study shows 86% of the dioceses have no policy on priests being involved in seminary work. It is naive to believe that potential seminary professors can be found only in 14% of our dioceses. Surprisingly only 29% of religious responding have a policy of involvement in seminaries. However, much larger percentages of religious engage in graduate studies and graduate studies are encouraged and supported in most religious communities, and expected in some.

The lack of credentialed priests has already significantly changed hiring practices and is resulting in an increasingly diverse faculty. This diversity provokes additional questions regarding the quality of faculty. The Holy See asks that faculty have at least a licentiate in their area of specialization. This assures a grounding in Catholic faith and traditions. Father Bleichner, reflecting on the increasing number of faculty with non-ecclesiastical degrees asks, "Can a seminary hire a new Ph.D. and count on a penumbra of belief, personal faith and commitment to the church which teaching in a seminary requires?" (op.cit., p 24) The discernment of these values makes faculty recruiting much more complicated. The question of the depth and breadth of Catholic understanding represented by degrees earned at non-Catholic institutions has not been sufficiently studied to give a clear answer.

The system in place thirty years ago for recruiting faculty for seminaries no longer functions. The expectations of the seminaries have changed. The relationships between the faculty member and the seminary have also changed. The mutual rights and obligations of seminary and faculty have also changed. In the foreseeable future, it is difficult to imagine that it will be possible to restore the former system.

The seminaries have gradually adjusted to the changing relationship to the diocese or religious order regarding the recruiting of faculty. The use of the word "recruiting" itself is indicative of change. The question for the future is whether these adjustments will be sufficient to maintain a quality faculty, especially regarding the number of priest faculty members.

The decrease in priest faculty has already had an impact within the seminaries. The reduced number of ordained faculty in residence has in many cases, increased the workload of the priest faculty in residence. This of course, varies from seminary to seminary. The *PPF*'s expressed desire that there be a sufficient number of priests on a seminary faculty to serve as "role models" will be more and more difficult to achieve.

Like most other issues, this one cannot be considered in isolation. More encompassing questions such as the role of women in the church, the role of religious in the church, the definition of what is specifically Catholic theology, the role of the laity in the church and in seminary training, the spirituality of the diocesan priest, the roles of other ecclesial ministries, and the relationship of seminary training and university-based theology also need to be addressed.

If current trends continue, there will be fewer priests, diocesan and religious, on seminary faculties in the years to come. This means there will be fewer priest role models on the faculties. Some will lament this development, others will see diverse faculties as more representative of the church. In any case, unless planning can provide more trained priests this will be the case.

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Commentary: Is The Seminary A Good Place to Work?

I find many indications of satisfaction and support, but I also find some troubling inconsistencies, especially as they concern the future.

Recently I have become acquainted with a growing body of literature concerning the assessment of faculty and the academic environments in which they work.[1] These studies examine organizational momentum, leadership styles, faculty vitality and morale, student quality and satisfaction, and other issues of institutional life. Most of these works emphasize the importance of faculty as the center of the academic endeavor. The institution will thrive if faculty members are "enthusiastic and creative; committed to their students and to excellence in teaching; serious about their scholarly activities; active and cooperative members of departmental and institutional committees; helpful, supportive, and stimulating in their interactions with colleagues."[2] How can we characterize the circumstances of present seminary faculty? Are they enthusiastic, committed, and serious about scholarship? Do they find the seminary a good place to work? Do they think it will be a good place to work in the future?

The responses of faculty, administrators, bishops, and religious superiors reported in these several NCEA surveys suggest to me that the answer to the questions of whether the seminary is a good place to work now and will be in the future is both yes and no. In other words, I find many indications of satisfaction and support, but I also find some troubling inconsistencies, especially as they concern the future. These findings are not necessarily contradictory, but rather they represent different dimensions of complex situations.

In this commentary, I will look at the several sides of each question. How should we characterize the present status of seminary faculty? What is their vocational status, age, and ethnicity? To develop a profile of current faculty, I will compare the faculty sample of this study with data from two other studies: *Reason for the Hope*,[3] and a current project on the future of theological faculty.[4] Is the seminary a good place to work now? Here I will examine the data concerning the academic environment, policies and practices that relate to satisfaction, and the level of perceived internal and external support of faculty. Will the seminary be a good place to work in the future? Here I will review and comment on the responses of bishops and religious superiors, the interests of faculty that attract them or cause them to leave, and the need for planning and vision to sustain seminaries in the future.

Comparison of Data

Each of the three studies to be compared (NCEA, Schuth, Future) includes different samples of nearly the same population, and, fortunately, the findings from all three are either highly congruous or the differences can be readily explained. The sample used in the NCEA study includes 235 responses (47%) of 490 faculty who were sent questionnaires. My own study based on data from 1988 (hereinafter referred to as 1988 data) included 898 faculty, all those listed as full time faculty in the catalogs, including rectors/presidents and deans. The study of future faculty includes 690 Catholic faculty as identified in ATS data (hereinafter referred to as the future study).

What is the vocational status of those who make up the faculty of Catholic seminaries? Of the 235 who responded to the NCEA study, 39% were diocesan priests, 34% religious priests, 14% religious sisters, 8% lay men, 6% lay women, and 1% religious brothers. Accordingly, 73% are ordained clergy and 29% are not clergy (more than 100% due to rounding). My 1988 data showed that 76% were ordained and 24% were not. If the NCEA data are representative, these figures suggest a shift away from ordained faculty at a rate of about 1% per year. Such a pattern is compatible with data on retirement and hiring patterns that are widely reported. However, I believe the NCEA sample is not representative in one respect: the proportions of all faculty who are diocesan priests (39% compared with 32.5% in 1988), and religious priests (34% compared with 43.7% in 1988). Almost certainly the differences are due to the response sample of the NCEA study rather than to a significant shift in the composition of the priest faculty. However, further investigation of the vocational status is warranted. The other categories compare as anticipated, showing a slight increase in the proportion of sisters and lay women, and a slight decrease in the proportion of lay men. The NCEA figures, in sum, show 82% of theological faculty are male and 20% female (more than 100% due to rounding). The future study shows virtually identical proportions, with 80% men and 20% women. These figures represent an increase of 6% in the proportion of women since 1988, when women religious comprised 10.4% and lay women 3.7% of seminary faculties.

The age and ethnicity of faculty is nearly the same in both the NCEA sample and the larger future study. In 1991, the NCEA median age was reported at 48 and the future study median age was 49. The median age in 1988 was just over 47, so, as expected, the current faculty is older, but only slightly so. The ethnic background of faculty is overwhelmingly white Anglo, with both the NCEA study and the future study reporting 95%. The remaining 5% are Hispanic, African American, and Asian. Both studies show most of these to be of Hispanic origin, the same as in 1988, but there is a slight increase in the number with Asian background.

Some 58% of the NCEA respondents reported that they held a doctoral degree, compared with 64% in my 1988 study. In sharp contrast, the future study indicates that over 80% of Catholic faculty are so qualified. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that the future study focuses on teaching faculty and does not include those who are engaged entirely in spiritual formation and have no responsibilities for teaching. My own observation is that the credentials of current faculty are improved when compared with faculty of about five years ago. I estimate that between 70% and 75% of current faculty have doctoral degrees, representing an increase of as much as 10% over five years. It is my belief that faculty holding doctoral degrees are under represented in the NCEA sample.

In summary, the proportion of priests and lay men has decreased slightly and the proportion of women religious and lay women has increased slightly. The vast majority (73%) of those teaching in seminaries continues to be priests. The age and ethnic characteristics of faculty have remained constant. The median age has increased less than one year and the ethnic composition is still dominantly white Anglo, despite concentrated efforts to recruit those of Hispanic, African American, and Asian background. The level of education seems to be higher according to some statistics and observations, but about the same according to others. Further study of the shifts in vocational status and academic qualifications are recommended.

Is the Seminary a Good Place to Work Now?

Seminary environments are vastly different from one another. Some have a positive, beneficial community spirit, they protect the time of faculty for the sake of academic excellence, and they enroll competent, responsible students; others do not.

We turn now to one of the main questions concerning theological faculty. Do they find the seminary a good place to work? Some clues about the level of satisfaction can be ascertained by looking at the academic environment, policies and practices, and level of support faculty feel they receive.

Data Concerning the Academic Environment

"Faculty rate their overall academic resources and environment moderately high," the NCEA study says. In part, this summary statement is drawn from the question of how fulfilling seminary work is for faculty. Of those responding, 73% agree strongly or agree that it fulfills a major aspiration they have had. This figure is supported by the response to what faculty see as major selling points for recruiting faculty. They are, in order:

1. Seminaries are known for their community spirit.

2. Seminary work offers the opportunity to increase one's academic excellence.

3. Seminary work forms church leaders for the future.

On the other hand, when faculty were asked to identify their greatest dissatisfaction, they listed, in order:

1. Too many meeting/administrative duties/lack of time to conduct research. (Cf. #2 above.)
2. Lack of support/community spirit/communication. (Cf. #1 above.)
3. Distrust of students/poor quality of students. (Ranked third, but much lower than 1 and 2; Cf. #3 above.)

Concerning this last point, about 60% of the faculty consider students to be good to excellent when measuring their quality and maturity. The other 40% find them to be fair or poor. Looking at the report from another angle, when asked what improvements were needed to attract faculty to seminary teaching, the two highest recommendations concerned increasing the emphasis on publishing, scholarship, research, etc., and increasing the emphasis on community spirit and collaboration. Somewhat lower, but mentioned third, was the need to increase salaries and fringe benefits.

Each selling point seems to have its down side. Does the seminary have good community spirit or not? Is there opportunity to develop academic excellence or do multiple duties detract from this important responsibility? Are leaders for the future church being formed or are current students incapable of such leadership? How can we explain the discrepancies in response to these questions? I suggest several possibilities. One is that seminary environments are vastly different from one another. Some have a positive, beneficial community spirit, they protect the time of faculty for the sake of academic excellence, and they enroll competent, responsible students; others do not. A second possibility is that both sets of statements are valid within the same institution, depending on who is making the evaluation, the time of the year, and other variables. Individuals in the same institution simply perceive and evaluate situations differently. Another possibility is that standards for measuring the quality of life in seminaries are not well articulated nor consistently enforced. While accrediting bodies and the *Program of Priestly Formation* attempt to set standards, these are variously understood. To me, the seemingly contradictory statements of the composite view can be explained by differences in interpretation of standards and in definitions of what constitutes an excellent seminary.

Policies and Practices That Relate to Professionalism and Satisfaction

"Seminary policies are very to somewhat effective in promoting professionalism," the NCEA study says. And at the same time, "Faculty believe that opportunities to do research, to continue one's education, and the salaries they receive could be much more adequate." The components of these responses give the same mixed message as does the evaluation of the environment. For example, about one-fourth are offered tenure, nearly half think it should be offered, and the other half are apparently content with their

present status. Rank is available for 85%. Even more striking, 89% say the seminary provides sabbaticals, but only 43% have taken one. Surely this low rate of utilizing sabbaticals contributes to the complaint that time is not available to conduct research and that faculty performance would be improved if there were more emphasis on publishing, scholarship, etc. Only 49% find opportunity for research to be very or somewhat adequate. A question not addressed in this survey is why sabbaticals are not taken. From my conversations with faculty, and based on Fr. Robert Wister's article on faculty scholarship in *Seminaries in Dialogue*, several reasons are offered. Some are not released from their assignments because replacements are not made available; others are not motivated to do the research required under most sabbatical policies; still others lack the funding and other support needed beyond what is supplied by the school. Many feel that research is not valued by their seminary and so they are not willing to make the personal commitment and sacrifice involved.

Concerning other policies and practices, salaries and fringe benefits are rated as very to somewhat adequate by 56% and 62% respectively; about 40% find them inadequate. We know that a number of highly qualified faculty move from seminaries to accept better offers at universities. Moreover, the responses indicate that if new faculty are to be attracted, an increase in salaries and benefits is necessary. Overall, it appears that while adequate policies concerning status, support, and salaries may be in place in most seminaries, the resources are not always available to implement the policies.

Level of Perceived Support, Both Internal and External to the Institution

The moral support that faculty receive from their peers and administrative and other staff is high, with over 80% saying it is excellent to good. Support from rectors and presidents is rated somewhat lower at 70% and 61% respectively. These findings correspond in part to my research, which identifies faculty peers and students as being most supportive. While faculty experience support from administrators, including deans, rectors and presidents, they more often report tensions in these relationships, especially when they are concerned about performance evaluation. The relationship is at times not one of equals and so the expected pressures and perceived lack of support are the result.

External support is measured on a different scale than internal support in the NCEA study. On a 9 point scale, with 9 as excellent support, local bishops rate highest at 6.5 and diocesan clergy lowest at 5.5. Correspondingly, 52% of the faculty feel very highly to highly respected, 30% feel medium respect, and 12% minimal to no respect. These figures suggest to me neither resounding endorsement for being a seminary professor, nor do they signal downright disapproval. Generally speaking, motivation for serving on a seminary faculty is more likely to come from one's colleagues than from outside approbation.

Will the Seminary be a Good Place to Work in the Future?

It is not uncommon in faculty searches to have only one or two qualified priests among fifty or more applicants.

The survey results suggest that at the present time, most faculty find the seminary a reasonably good place to work, not withstanding the qualifications identified above. What does the future hold? To answer this question, it is important to know if seminaries will be adequately staffed, what the concerns of faculty are, and what plan or vision for the future is being considered.

The Responses of Bishops and Religious Superiors

As noted, bishops and religious superiors are viewed by faculty as being moderately supportive of their work in seminaries. The majority of bishops see the presence of priests as essential for modeling priestly life and many have assigned their best educated and otherwise highly qualified men to seminary work. The bishops and religious superiors who responded to this survey indicate that they are sending a significant number of priests for graduate studies. Yet seminary administrators often report that they are unable to hire qualified priests. It is not uncommon in faculty searches to have only one or two qualified priests among fifty or more applicants. The difficulty may arise because many diocesan priests are studying canon law, and few are preparing to teach in seminaries. Religious priests are studying in a wider range of theological disciplines, but often their religious institutes sponsor colleges and universities or engage in other works where these men will be employed. In spite of good intentions, the end result is a small supply of qualified priests being prepared for seminary work.

The Concerns of Faculty About the Future

Maintaining a well-qualified faculty in the future is a central goal for many seminary rectors/presidents and deans. The factors that contribute to the sense of well-being of faculty need to be identified and nurtured—community spirit, academic opportunities, and support for the work of forming future leaders for the church. Deliberate efforts to foster a healthy and satisfying work environment pay off with good retention of faculty, and a high level of retention usually contributes to sound academic programs and effective long range planning.

Yet, many faculty are concerned about the loss of colleagues who leave their ranks. We know from the NCEA survey on "The Recruitment and Retention of Faculty in Roman Catholic Theological Seminaries," that reasons for leaving are diverse. Administrators listed some 64 different reasons why faculty left their institutions. By category, they are as follows:

Reason	*Number*	*Percentage*
1. Assigned to other work in parishes or religious communities	18	28
2. Found the work unsatisfying, poor performance, didn't fit in, work too demanding	14	22
3. Retirement, age, resignation	12	19
4. Better offer from a university or better position in another setting	10	16
5. Lack of support, poor location, inadequate situation	5	8
6. Left the priesthood	4	6
7. Seeking advanced degree	1	2
TOTAL	64	101

As one analyzes this list, it is obvious that some change occurs in usual predicable ways. In other cases, especially when talented faculty are arbitrarily assigned elsewhere or choose to move to a university (44%), the loss can have an intrusive impact on the stability and interaction of a faculty. As faculty look to the future, one of their major concerns is to have an adequate number of well-qualified colleagues. Planning is required if this goal is to be met.

Planning and Vision to Sustain Seminaries in the Future

Many bishops and religious superiors mention the importance of a national planning effort on behalf of seminaries. Almost none of the 45 or so theologates that are operating today is filled to capacity; almost all could handle nearly twice as many students as are presently enrolled. It seems obvious that at least some of these schools should close, and yet that is not happening. Several reasons for the slow change can be cited: large dioceses see their major seminaries as a symbol of influence and are willing to support them at almost any cost; many dioceses count on the seminaries to provide education for a wide range of ministries; others depend on the theologically educated faculty to serve as a resource in the diocese; and still others are located far from any other seminary and cherish the ministerial preparation that reflects their own region. These are understandable reasons for maintaining most of the seminaries that are now open, but the system consumes the efforts of a large number of faculty and staff. The dilemma is that while almost every seminary can justify continuing its own programs, the consequence is that on a national level good stewardship is not being exercised.

Conclusion

Without a clear sense of purpose and direction that is in tune with the needs of the church today, some institutions will flounder.

This commentary begins with three questions: How should we characterize the present status of seminary faculty? Is the seminary a good place to work now? Will the seminary be a good place to work in the future? Overall, the survey responses suggest trends rather than provide clear cut answers. The data show that the faculty currently working in seminaries are reasonably satisfied. Yet there are concerns: nearly half mention problems with support for scholarly endeavors, some are troubled by the level of salaries and benefits, and still others find the community to be less than supportive. We do not know from the data if certain sub-groups are more dissatisfied than others. For example, do diocesan priests living in the seminary perceive a lack of community spirit? Do lay faculty express the need for better salaries? Do women require more support for their scholarship? Is a relatively large group satisfied with most aspects of the seminary, or is dissatisfaction concentrated with a few? We can say, it seems to me, that about two-thirds of the faculty are reasonably content. The situation is not widely distressing, but improvements can be made.

When looking toward the future, I think it is critical for each seminary to assess its own status, to make plans and develop a vision. Without a clear sense of purpose and direction that is in tune with the needs of the church today, some institutions will flounder. Not all stand on equal ground. A few are on the threshold of closing; a few others are on the threshold of greatness. Most stand on a vast middle ground. They will move toward greatness if they have a vision for the future and put in place policies and practices that will attract and support vigorously competent, enthusiastic, and devoted faculty.

Endnotes

1. See, for example, Austin, Ann E., et. al. *A Good Place to Work* (CIC Publications: Washington, DC, 1991); Bowen, H.R., and Schuster, J.H. *American Professors: A National Resource Imperiled* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. *The Condition of the Professoriate: Attitudes and Trends* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), and Rice, R.E., and Austin, A.E. "High Faculty Morale: What Exemplary Colleges Do Right." (*Change*, 20:2, 1988), 51-58.
2. Austin, Ann E., et. al., *Ibid.*, p. 1.
3. Schuth, Katarina. *Reason for the Hope: The Futures of Roman Catholic Theologates* (Michael Glazier, Inc., Wilmington, DE, 1989).

4. The *Project on the Future of Theological Faculty* is an ongoing study of all faculty in members of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). It is being conducted at the Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education by Barbara Wheeler and Katarina Schuth. Data from this project is preliminary.

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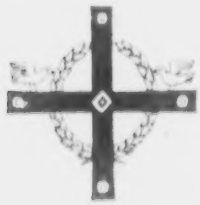

Executive Summary

Profile of the Faculty

Of those responding:

- Ninety-seven percent of the seminary faculty are Catholic, 95% are white Anglos, 4% are Hispanic, 1% are African American or Asian.
- Thirty-nine percent of the faculty are diocesan priests, 34% are religious priests, 14% are religious sisters, 8% are laymen, 6% are lay women, and 1% are religious brothers.
- Forty-eight is the median age of the seminary faculty.
- More than half have a doctorate, with half the degrees in theology.
- A little more than half were asked to "consider the position", 24% "sought the position", 20% were "assigned".
- Most stay in seminary work for an average of 8 years. Most have multiple roles: teaching, administration, spiritual direction.
- Almost half reside in the seminary, 13% in a house of formation, 39% elsewhere.
- About three-fourths find their work "fulfilling".
- Faculty rate their overall academic resources and environment moderately high.
- Faculty are evenly divided over the opportunity to produce scholarly publications.
- Faculty rate moral support somewhat high.
- Faculty believe that opportunities to do research, to continue one's education and salaries they receive could be much more adequate.
- Seminary policies are very to somewhat effective in promoting professionalism. About one-fourth are offered tenure, almost half say it should be offered, more than two-thirds have contracts. Eighty-nine percent say the seminary provides sabbaticals but only 43% have taken one. Eighty-five percent have an opportunity to move up in rank, 71% are expected to do research.
- About 19% of faculty rate the quality and maturity of students as excellent, about 50% as good, 33% as fair, and about 5% as poor.

- Fifty-seven percent plan to continue in seminary work. Twenty-eight percent plan to remain for several more years and 14% plan to leave in the near future.
- Almost three-fourths consider the Program of Priestly Formation as very to somewhat helpful, 26% say it is of little to no help.
- The major dissatisfactions of faculty are too many meetings, administrative duties, and lack of time for research.
- Faculty say seminary work could be made more attractive by increased emphasis on publishing, academic excellence, research and support for scholarship. Equally important is an increased emphasis on community spirit and collaboration among peers. Also mentioned are increased salaries and fringe benefits.
- The chief reasons for leaving seminary work are the desire to do pastoral work, just to move on, the need for better salaries and the lure of better opportunities.
- Faculty suggestions to meet the challenges of the future concentrate on faculty growth and improvements in courses and methodology. They say seminaries should emphasize publishing, keep in contact with outside associations and ecumenical groups, recruit more minorities, have more diversity in gender, exchange faculty for multicultural experiences. Further they say seminaries should develop skills which will help future priests to be leaders: pastoral, flexible, imaginative, collaborative, open minded, receptive to cultural and global issues.
- The most difficult challenges to recruiting will be the smaller pool of priests, reluctance of bishops to release priests, tensions over orthodoxy, academic freedom, lack of finances.
- Faculty suggest that bishops on the national level need to commit to consolidating seminaries, develop programs for vocations and for faculty recruitment, send more priests for graduate work, develop financial strategies, especially endowment programs.

Bishops and Religious Institutes

Of those responding:

- Seventeen percent of bishops own or conduct a seminary, 57% have personnel in seminary work (not necessarily in their own diocese). (This includes college programs)
- Dioceses report contributing from 8 to 41 priests to seminary work.

- Four out of five of the bishops have priests in graduate work. The subjects most studied are theology and canon law.
- A little more than half of dioceses have a policy regarding priests pursuing graduate studies.
- Only 14% of dioceses have a policy regarding priests becoming involved in seminary work. However, 81% do not set a limit on how long a priest may do seminary work and 84% do not place a limit on how many priests may be involved in seminary work.
- About one-third of religious institutes own or conduct a seminary.
- A little less than two-thirds of religious institutes have personnel in seminary work.
- Almost three-fourths of religious institutes have priests pursuing graduate work.
- Nearly half of all priests, diocesan and religious, who are pursuing graduate studies are studying Theology, Scripture, Spirituality and related fields.
- More than one-fourth of diocesan priests pursuing graduate studies are studying Canon Law, while only 5% of religious are studying in this field.
- Almost one-third of religious institutes have a policy regarding priests becoming involved in seminary work. However, 88% do not set a limit on how long he may do seminary work, and 96% do not place a limit on how many priests may be involved in seminary training.
- The majority of bishops and religious superiors feel that priests who pursue graduate work are looked upon favorably although some noted that other priests felt that they do not have equal opportunities.
- The majority of bishops feel that a predominately priest faculty is necessary for role modeling, creating a priestly environment and for economic reasons. Most religious agree but are less insistent.
- A good number of bishops and religious superiors feel that a faculty should be mixed as long as priests are in the majority, orthodoxy is preserved, competency is guaranteed and quality is upheld.
- Bishops and religious superiors feel that they can contribute to seminary training by committing a certain percentage of priests to seminary training and making the training of qualified priests a top priority.
- A significant number of bishops and religious superiors suggest the consolidation of smaller seminaries, the development of regional seminaries, and the better sharing of resources and personnel among seminaries.
- A significant number suggests establishing a national pool or clearing house of priests dedicated to seminary work. This would entail identifying

seminarians who would be considered good future seminary personnel and actively recruiting priests with qualifications.

- Some bishops would like to see a national plan that would make shared responsibility for seminaries a top priority.

Seminary Administrators

Of those responding:

- Seminaries attempted to hire new faculty to replace 103 faculty and for 39 new positions over the last two years. This equals 3.7 new positions or replacements per seminary every two years.
- For the 142 positions, 28 sought a diocesan priest, 15 a religious priest, for 34 ordination status was not considered, for 38 preference was given to ordained, but was open to all.
- For 103 positions, in 64 instances a person with desired qualifications was hired.
- Seventeen seminaries responded that they had written guidelines for hiring, 14 that they had no written guidelines.
- Ten seminaries specifically sought a woman or a lay person, 24 did not.
- The major reasons faculty leave seminaries are retirement, resignation from the priesthood, return to pastoral work, better offers from other academic institutions.
- Administrators write that it is difficult to find qualified personnel. This is due to the smaller pool of qualified priests. They say bishops must be more willing to release priests for seminary work.
- They also note that some qualified priests are reluctant to pursue graduate work and others are reluctant to work in seminaries.

Study of the Seminary Faculty

Profile of the Seminary Faculty

What Does a General Profile of Seminary Faculty Look Like Regarding:

- Vocational status
- Religious Denomination
- Age
- Racial/ethnic Background

The respondents to this study consist of 39% diocesan priests, 34% religious priests, 14% religious sisters, 8% lay men, 6% lay women, and 1% religious brothers.

Respondents are predominately Catholic (97%), and white anglos (95%). Hispanics represent a little more than 4%, while Asians and Blacks represent a little less than 1% of the respondents.

The median age of faculty members is 48 years.

Table 1 reflects the range of ages and how they cluster.

TABLE 1 Age

	Percent		*Percent*
30-40	18	51-60	30
51-60	30	61-80	15

What is the Educational Background of Respondents Regarding:

- Level of degrees
- Majors

More than half of the respondents have either a PhD, JCD, or STD.

TABLE 2 Degrees

	Percent		*Percent*
Ph.D./JCD/STD	58	SSL/STL/JCL	15
MTS/MDiv/MA	22	BA/BS	04

Further analysis reflects that 5% of the respondents have more than one doctorate, 20% have a doctorate and licentiate, and 10% have more than one masters degree.

Academic Majors of Faculty

The greatest area of concentration of respondents is theology, followed by social sciences.

TABLE 3 Majors

	Percent		*Percent*
1. Theology	48	5. Philosophy	05
2. Social sciences	17	6. Canon law	04
3. Church history	09	7. Liturgy	01
4. Scripture	09	8. Other	07

How Were Faculty Enlisted in the Seminary? What Assignments Did They Have Before Coming to the Seminary? How Many Years Have They Been in Seminary Work? What Are Their Primary Responsibilities in Seminary? Where do They Reside?

A little over one half (54%) of the faculty were "asked to consider the position", 24% "sought the position", 20% were "assigned to the position", and 1% indicated another category than those listed.

Table 4 reflects the positions held by the faculty before becoming engaged in seminary work.

TABLE 4 Positions

	Percent		*Percent*
Pastoral work	36	Diocesan/religious order administrator	16
Teacher	28	Other	01
Student	14		

The most common number of years a person stays in seminary work is 8 years. Twenty-five percent report having been in seminary work 15 years or more.

Sixty-one percent of the faculty listed teaching as their first responsibility, 21% listed some type of administration and 9% listed spiritual direction.

However, when compared to the second responsibility faculty have, only 22% listed teaching as their second responsibility, 4% administration, and 5% spiritual direction. This substantiates the comments found in the open ended questions which said that most faculty members have multiple roles to fulfill in seminary work.

Almost half (48%) of the faculty reside at the seminary. Thirteen percent say they live in a house of formation, and the remaining 39% live either in a home, convent, rectory or living situation other than the seminary or a formation house.

How Fulfilling is Seminary Work for Those in it?

Table 5 reflects that faculty find many of their major aspirations are fulfilled through their involvement in seminary work.

TABLE 5 How much do you agree or disagree with the statement, "Seminary work fulfills a major aspiration I have had?"

	Percent		*Percent*
Strongly agree	32	Disagree	12
Agree	41	Strongly disagree	02
Not certain	12		

How do Faculty Members Rate:

- Incentive to publish
- Expertise of their peers
- Academic resources
- Moral support
- Spirit of the faculty
- Teaching load
- Support from the outside
- Quality/maturity of students
- Physical conditions as they pertain to fostering community

With the exception of the incentive to publish, faculty rate their overall academic resources and environment moderately high.

Forty-seven percent rate good to excellent the opportunity for producing scholarly publications. Twenty-eight percent say it is fair and 21% say it is poor. Three percent say it does not pertain to their faculty.

The majority of faculty (91%) say that their peers rate from good to excellent in commanding their areas of expertise.

Seventy-six percent rate the academic resources of their institution as excellent or good.

Seventy-two percent say that the overall spirit is good to excellent.

Approximately three-fourths (74%) say their teaching load is acceptable.

More than two-thirds (70%) say the physical conditions of their institution are good to excellent. Twenty-two percent say the conditions are fair, and 8% consider them poor.

Moral Support

Table 6 reflects that moral support rates somewhat high for faculties.

TABLE 6 How would you rate the moral support you receive from:

	Percent				
	Excellent	*Good*	*Fair*	*Poor*	*Not pertain*
Peers on faculty	42	49	14	04	00
Support staff, e.g. secretaries	43	41	13	02	01
Administrative staff	45	38	13	04	00
Rector	40	30	14	10	05
President	34	27	11	10	17

Salaries, Benefits, and Opportunities to Grow

Table 7 reflects that opportunities to do research, to continue one's education, and salaries faculty receive could be much more adequate.

TABLE 7 How adequate do you feel the following are:

	Percent					
	Very adequate	*Somewhat adequate*	*Just adequate*	*Somewhat inadequate*	*Very inadequate*	*NA*
Salary	26	30	16	11	10	07
Fringe benefits	38	24	15	06	07	10
Vacation	77	13	03	02	01	04
Opportunity for continuing ed.	38	30	09	09	06	07
Opportunity for research	20	29	14	13	13	11

Are Seminary Faculties Offered Tenure, Rank, and Sabbaticals? How Many of the Faculty Have a Contract? Are Research and Publishing Part of the Institution's Expectations? How Does the Faculty Rate its Institution on Promoting Professionalism?

In general, seminary policies are very to somewhat effective in promoting professionalism. A little over one-quarter of the faculty say they are offered tenure (26%), whereas a little over two-fifths (46%) say it should be offered. The responses on the plausibility of tenure are given in the responses to the open ended questions.

- A little over two-thirds (69%) have a contract.

- The majority (89%) say the school provides them with sabbaticals, but only 43% have taken one.
- The majority (85%) say they have an opportunity to move up in rank.
- A little under three-quarters (71%) say that they are expected to do research.

Professionalism

Table 8 reflects that seminary policies are generally very to somewhat effective in promoting professionalism.

TABLE 8 How effective are the institutions' policies in promoting professionalism?

Percent			
Very effective	*Somewhat effective*	*Not too effective*	*Ineffective*
27	57	13	03

How do Faculty Feel About the Support and Respect They Receive?

TABLE 9 How much outside support do faculty members feel they receive on a scale of 1 to 9 *1 = no support, 9 = excellent support.*

Local bishop	6.5	Colleagues elsewhere	5.9
Religious superior	6.2	Bishops in general	5.6
Religious communities	6.1	Diocesan clergy	5.5

Over half the respondents (52%) feel very highly to highly respected, 30% feel medium respect, and 12% feel minimal to no respect.

Table 10 reflects faculty ratings of students in the areas of quality and maturity.

TABLE 10 How would you rate the quality and maturity of the students?

	Percent			
	Excellent	*Good*	*Fair*	*Poor*
Quality	09	51	33	06
Maturity	10	52	33	04

How do Faculty Feel About Continuing in Seminary Work?

Fifty-seven percent say "I see myself continuing as I feel up to it, and I am wanted," 28% say, "I see myself dedicating several more years to it, but then moving on," 14% see it ending in the near future.

How Helpful Has the PPF (Program for Priestly Formation) Been to the Institution?

Almost three-fourths (73%) say very to somewhat helpful, 26% say it is of little to no help.

FURTHER ANALYSIS

Is There Any One Group that is More Fulfilled in Seminary Work? Does the Support Faculty Get Influence Their Feeling of Fulfillment?

Those who serve in the seminary longer, and who are older, tend to be more fulfilled than those who aren't.

Those who feel strong support either from their peers, the students or diocesan clergy tend to be significantly more fulfilled than those who don't.

All other differences according to vocational status, gender, and age were not significant.

Responses of the Seminary Faculty to the Open-Ended Questions

Fourteen open ended questions were designed to encourage the faculty to explain in their own words their attitudes about certain issues in seminary life.

Is Tenure Realistic for a Seminary?

A little less than half the respondents said tenure is realistic. Many who responded yes or no qualified their responses:

No, with qualifications:

- Tenure inhibits a seminary from dismissing someone who may be unorthodox, or whose behavior is questionable.
- Priest faculties are subjected to reassignment for reasons beyond the control of the seminary.
- Tenure is not a value for most priests/religious.
- A seminary faculty should be fluid and flexible.
- Long term agreements are better, especially if the faculty consists of lay persons.
- The seminary is not about academics only.

Yes, with qualifications:

- Tenure is needed for job security, especially for lay faculty.
- Tenure fosters commitment, quality of service, publishing, continuity and greater identification with the institution.
- It must be if a school of theology is in a consortium.
- It is necessary to guarantee academic freedom.
- It enables a faculty to better handle political pressures of the ecclesial system.
- It forms a basis for due process.
- It should be if the seminary has the resources to uphold it.

Is The Opportunity for Rank Realistic For Your Institution?

The majority responded, yes.

Reasons for saying yes:

- Rank increases morale and one's self image.
- Rank encourages a high degree of excellence, academic growth and is a guideline for increasing salaries.
- It is important for the renewal of accreditation and is required if the seminary is affiliated with a university.
- The increasing number of lay faculty make this imperative.

Is Expecting Publishing Reasonable for Your Institution?

Approximately three-fourths of the faculty replied, yes.

The reasons are:

- Publishing is expected in any graduate school and sabbaticals make this a requirement.
- It is the only way to keep up with and to contribute to the field.
- Publishing and research are part of faculty development.

The one-fourth that replied, no, said:

- Some priests are assisting in parishes in their spare time or are involved with formation.
- It should not be for persons in formation, but only required for those who teach.

If You Have a Sabbatical What is It?

The majority of faculty that have a sabbatical policy receive a sabbatical every seven years. Variations on this policy are:

- A sabbatical with full pay is given after tenure for those who are full professors.
- One year for a sabbatical after seven years with full/half pay.
- Six months/one semester for a sabbatical after seven years with full/half pay.

If You Have Any Dissatisfactions in Your Role as a Faculty Member What Is The One Biggest Dissatisfaction?

Ranked first is:

- Too many meetings/administrative duties/lack of time to conduct research.

Ranked close to this is:

- Lack of support/community spirit/communication.

Ranked much lower is:

- Distrust of students/poor quality of students.

If You Are Discontinuing Your Position in the Near Future, Please Explain Why.

Only 14% say they will be discontinuing in the near future. The reasons vary equally between having reached retirement are, dissatisfaction with the quality of students, a dissatisfaction with the climate in the church and a lack of academic freedom. However, 28% indicated they would devote several more years to seminary formation and then move on.

What Would You Like to See Improved in Faculty Performance to Make the Faculty Attractive to Those Who Might Seek a Position on It?

Almost equally mentioned are:

- Increase the emphasis on publishing, academic excellence, research and the support needed for scholarship, i.e., research assistants, secretaries, library facilities, etc.
- Increase the emphasis on community spirit, and collaboration among peers.

Somewhat below these recommendations is the recommendation:

- Increase salaries and fringe benefits.

If You Were Responsible for Recruiting Faculty for Your Seminary What Two selling Points Would You Make?

Three selling points are equally mentioned:

- Seminaries are known for community spirit.
- Seminary work offers the opportunity to increase one's academic excellence.
- Seminary work forms church leaders for the future.

If You Were Responsible for Recruiting Faculty for Your Seminary What Two Cautions Would You Give?

- Recruits should know that seminary teaching will put great demands on time and energy. It is more than one job and often goes beyond a normal work day.
- Recruits should not expect to teach large numbers of students, or the brightest. The students will need a time to do remedial work.
- A recruit will have to be flexible in finding support for his or her work, with peers and with the students. Time for research is very limited.

Although There Can Be Many Reasons for Quitting a Faculty, What One or Two Reasons Have You Heard Faculty Members Give Most for Quitting?

The two reasons most frequently mentioned are:

- To do parochial/pastoral work, or just to move on.
- The need for a better salary and the lure of better opportunities.

Mentioned somewhat below these two reasons is:

- Conflict over church teachings/hierarchial emphasis/sexism/conservative vs. liberal mentalities.

If the PPF (Program for Priestly Formation) is Helpful, in What Ways Has It Been Helpful?

The most common words and phrases used in describing the helpfulness of the PPF are:

- Provides guidelines/a standard/a norm/a framework/direction/focus. It articulates philosophy/encourages holistic approach/communicates expectations of the bishops/directs/prompts goals setting/guides expectations of the faculty.

Other comments are:

- It challenges theological education so that it is more in contact with pastoral and cultural realities.
- It validates many changes that have taken place in the seminary.
- It stimulates creative thinking.
- It is helpful for accreditation.
- It is used for producing a student handbook
- It provides model programs.
- It sets tone for work.

As the Priesthood Continues to Face New Challenges What Two or Three Creative Suggestions Would You Make to Insure That the Faculty Effectively Prepares Future Priests to Meet the Challenge?

The responses revolve around two key areas: 1. faculty growth, 2. improvements in courses and methodology.

- More emphasis on publishing.
- Keep contact with outside world, be contemporary, ecumenical, involved in associations, combine academic with pastoral.
- Recruit more from the minorities/have diversity in age, gender, state of life.
- Have faculty exchanges for multi-cultural experience.
- Evaluate faculty/offer programs for updating.

Specifics on improving courses and methodology:

- A need to teach futuristic thinking.
- A need to develop teaching skills which will help future priests be leaders, pastoral, flexible, creative, imaginative, collaborative, open minded, cross cultural, global, and pluralistic.
- Teach students to connect academic with practical, to develop self esteem, self discipline and a practical spirituality and how to deal with the speed of change.

What Do You Think Will be the Most Difficult Challenges a Seminary Will Face in Recruiting Faculty Members in the Future?

The three most mentioned areas are:

- There will be a smaller pool of priests to pick from for faculty/bishops and religious superiors will be less willing to let priests go/the interest of priests becoming a seminary faculty member will drop.
- Good candidates for becoming seminary professors will be discouraged because of tensions over orthodoxy, academic freedom and conservative vs. liberal thinking.
- Lack of finances will limit planning, creative ideas and the hiring of a competent lay faculty as well as clergy faculty.

What Suggestions Would You Make to Meet These Challenges Successfully?

- On the national level bishops need to commit to consolidating seminaries.
- Develop aggressive recruitment programs for vocations and seminary faculty/send more priests for graduate work.
- Develop aggressive financial and especially endowment programs/ strengthen alumni/encourage more dialogue on the problem.
- Upgrade the quality of the seminary program, faculty and students.
- Prepare more laity to take over role of priests teachers and let priests do formation work.
- Renew the theology of the priesthood.
- Reduce workloads of faculty members, increase professional expectations, and reward professional accomplishments.
- Examine the institutional prerequisites for ordination.

Seminary Faculty Survey Instrument and Raw Data

Item	*Description*	*Level*	*Percentage*
1	Please circle your vocational status.	1. Diocesan priest	39
		2. Religious priest	34
		3. Women religious	14
		4. Religious brother	01
		5. Laywoman	06
		6. Layman	06
2	To what religious denomination do you belong?	1. Catholic	97
		2. Other denomination	03
3	Please give your age as of your last birthday	between 30-40 yrs. old	18
		40-50	38
		50-60	30
		60 and over	15
		median of age	48
3a	What are your predominant racial/ethnic backgrounds?	White	94.7
		Black	0.4
		Hispanic	4.4
		Asian	0.4
4	What are the two highest degrees you hold, what area were they in and from where did you receive them?	Ph.D, JCD, STD	58
		MTS, MDiv, MA	22
		SSL, STL, JCL	15
		BA, BS	04
		Social Sciences	17
		Theology	48
		Scripture	09
		Canon Law	04
		History, Church hist.	09
		Philosophy	05
		Liturgy	01
		Other	07
5	How many years have you spent in seminary work?		median = 8 years

Item	*Description*	*Level*	*Percentage*
6	What were your last two positions/assignments before being involved in seminary work?	pastoral work/associate pastor/pastor	36
		teacher	28
		student	14
		diocesan/religious administrator	16
		other	01
7	Please list the three primary responsibilities you have as a faculty member.		
8	Where do you reside? Please circle response.	1. Seminary	48
		2. House of formation	13
		3. Other	39
9	How did you become a faculty member?	1. I sought the position	24
		2. I was asked to consider the position	54
		3. I was assigned to the position	20
		4. Other than above	01
10	How much do you agree or disagree with the statement, "Seminary work fulfills a major aspiration I have had."?	1. Strongly agree	32
		2. Agree	42
		3. Not certain	12
		4. Disagree	12
		5. Strongly disagree	02
11	How would you rate the overall physical conditions of the institution in terms of fostering community among the faculty?	1. Excellent	26
		2. Good	44
		3. Fair	22
		4. Poor	08
12	How would you rate the moral support you receive from peers on the faculty?	1. Excellent	42
		2. Good	40
		3. Fair	14
		4. Poor	04
		5. Doesn't pertain	00

Item	Description	Level	Percentage
13	How would you rate the moral support you receive from support staff, e.g., secretaries, etc.?	1. Excellent	43
		2. Good	41
		3. Fair	13
		4. Poor	02
		5. Doesn't pertain	01
14	How would you rate the moral support you receive from administrative staff, e.g., registrar, dean, etc.?	1. Excellent	45
		2. Good	38
		3. Fair	13
		4. Poor	04
		5. Doesn't pertain	00
15	How would you rate the moral support you receive from rector?	1. Excellent	40
		2. Good	30
		3. Fair	14
		4. Poor	10
		5. Doesn't pertain	05
16	How would you rate the moral support you receive from president?	1. Excellent	34
		2. Good	27
		3. Fair	11
		4. Poor	10
		5. Doesn't pertain	17
17	How would you rate the moral support you receive from students?	1. Excellent	34
		2. Good	47
		3. Fair	15
		4. Poor	03
		5. Doesn't pertain	01
18	In general, how does the faculty rate in regard to producing scholarly publications?	1. Excellent	14
		2. Good	33
		3. Fair	28
		4. Poor	21
		5. Doesn't pertain	03
19	In general, how does the faculty rate in regard to commanding their areas of expertise?	1. Excellent	49
		2. Good	42
		3. Fair	06
		4. Poor	01
		5. Doesn't pertain	01

Item	Description	Level	Percentage
20	In general, how do academic resources for the faculty rate? e.g., library, graduate assistants, etc.	1. Excellent	25
		2. Good	51
		3. Fair	16
		4. Poor	05
		5. Doesn't pertain	03
21	How would you rate the overall spirit of faculty?	1. Excellent	22
		2. Good	50
		3. Fair	22
		4. Poor	05
		5. Doesn't pertain	00
22	In general, how would you rate the academic quality of students?	1. Excellent	09
		2. Good	51
		3. Fair	33
		4. Poor	06
		5. Doesn't pertain	00
23	How would you rate the overall maturity level of students?	1. Excellent	10
		2. Good	52
		3. Fair	33
		4. Poor	04
		5. Doesn't pertain	00
24	Does your institution offer tenure?	1. Yes	26
		2. No	73
25	Should tenure be available to seminary faculty?	1. Yes	46
		2. No	54
26	Is tenure realistic for a seminary? (Please explain.)		
27	Overall, how effective are the institution's policies in promoting faculty professionalism?	1. Very effective	27
		2. Somewhat effective	57
		3. Not too effective	13
		4. Very ineffective	03
28	Do you have the opportunity for rank, i.e., full professor, associate, etc.?	1. Yes	85
		2. No	15
29	Is this realistic for your institution? (Please explain.)		

Item	Description	Level	Percentage
30	Are research and publishing part of the institution's expectations?	1. Yes 2. No	71 29
31	Is this a reasonable expectation? (Please explain.)		
32	Does your school have a policy that provides for sabbaticals?	1. Yes 2. No	89 11
33	If yes, what is the policy?		
34	If your institution has a policy and you have met its requirements have you taken a sabbatical?	1. Yes 2. No	43 57
35	Of all the responsibilities you undertake what two give you the most satisfaction?		
36	If you have any dissatisfactions in your role as a faculty member what is the one biggest dissatisfaction you have? (Please comment.)		
37	Do you have a contract?	1. Yes 2. No	69 31
38	How adequate do you feel your salary is for you?	1. Very adequate 2. Somewhat adequate 3. Just adequate 4. Somewhat inadequate 5. Very inadequate 6. Not applicable	26 30 16 10 11 07
39	How adequate do you feel your fringe benefits are for you?	1. Very adequate 2. Somewhat adequate 3. Just adequate 4. Somewhat inadequate 5. Very inadequate 6. Not applicable	38 24 15 06 07 10
40	How adequate do you feel your vacation is for you?	1. Very adequate 2. Somewhat adequate 3. Just adequate 4. Somewhat inadequate 5. Very inadequate 6. Not applicable	77 13 03 02 01 04

Item	Description	Level	Percentage
41	How adequate do you feel your opportunities for continuing education are for you?	1. Very adequate	38
		2. Somewhat adequate	30
		3. Just adequate	09
		4. Somewhat inadequate	09
		5. Very inadequate	06
		6. Not applicable	07
42	How adequate do you feel your opportunities to do research are for you?	1. Very adequate	20
		2. Somewhat adequate	29
		3. Just adequate	14
		4. Somewhat inadequate	13
		5. Very inadequate	13
		6. Not applicable	11
43	How would you rate your teaching load?	1. It is too heavy	09
		2. It is O.K.	74
		3. It is light	17
44	How much support do you receive from the diocesan clergy? (Mark 0 if doesn't apply or don't know.)		mean = 5.5
45	How much support do you receive from religious communities? (Mark 0 if doesn't apply or don't know.)		mean = 6.1
46	How much support do you receive from religious superiors? (Mark 0 if doesn't apply or don't know.)		mean = 6.2
47	How much support do you receive from bishops in general? (Mark 0 if doesn't apply or don't know.)		mean = 5.6
48	How much support do you receive from the local bishop? (Mark 0 if doesn't apply or don't know.)		mean = 6.5
49	How much support do you receive from colleagues in other colleges and universities? (Mark 0 if doesn't apply or don't know.)		mean = 5.9
50	What level of respect do you feel the institution receives from other academic communities?	1. There is very high respect	13
		2. There is high respect	39
		3. There is medium respect	30
		4. There is respect but it is minimal	11
		5. There is no respect	01
		6. I don't really know	06

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Item	*Description*	*Level*	*Percentage*
51	How do you feel about continuing seminary work?	1. I see myself continuing as long as I feel up to it, and I am wanted	57
		2. I see myself dedicating several more years to it, but then moving on	28
		3. I see it ending in the near future	14
52	If you are discontinuing your position in the near future, please explain why.		
53	What would you like to see improved in faculty performance to make the faculty attractive to those who might seek a position on it?		
54	If you were responsible for recruiting faculty for your seminary what two selling points would you make?		
55	If you were responsible for recruiting faculty for your seminary what two cautions would you give?		
56	Although there can be many reasons for quitting a faculty, what one or two reasons most have you heard faculty members give for quitting?		
57	How helpful has the PPF (Program of Priestly Formation) been to the institution?	1. Very helpful	23
		2. Helpful	50
		3. Of little help	25
		4. Of no help	01
58	If helpful, in what has the PPF been helpful?		
59	As the priesthood continues to face new challenges what two or three creative suggestions would you make to insure that the faculty effectively prepares future priests to meet the challenges?		
60	What do you think will be the most difficult challenges a seminary will face in recruiting faculty members in the future?		
61	What suggestions would you make to meet these challenges successfully?		

Study of the Bishops and Major Superiors of Religious Institutes

Bishops' Responses

A total of 185 questionnaires were sent to the bishops of the U.S. with a return of 128 or 69%. The responses of these bishops follows. Seventeen percent of the bishops own or conduct a seminary, and 43% have no personnel from their diocese in seminary work.

How Many Priests Do Dioceses Have in Seminary Work?

Sixty-four of the 124 dioceses responding have priests in seminary work. Bishops who have priests serving in seminaries average 4.4 priests per diocese.

Of all the (arch)dioceses reporting in the study, a total of 159 priests from those dioceses are in seminary work.

It should be noted that some (arch)dioceses report contributing from 8 to 41 priests. Below are dioceses in this category.

New York	41	Cleveland	12
Chicago	27	Brooklyn	11
Philadelphia	27	Detroit	11
Boston	24	Cincinnati	10
Newark	16	New Orleans	9
Los Angeles	15	Milwaukee	8
St. Paul	13		

N.B. In some cases, these figures include theologate, college and high school programs.

How Many Priests Per Diocese Pursue Graduate Studies?

Eighty percent of the bishops have priests currently pursuing graduate studies. They average 1.7 priests per diocese. In those (arch)dioceses responding to the study, a total of 223 priests are pursuing graduate studies. The subjects most studied are theology and canon law.

Thirty-one percent of the (arch)dioceses report having three or more priests at one time pursuing graduate studies. (Arch)dioceses reporting five or more priests are:

Paterson	10	Detroit	6
Washington	8	Philadelphia	5
Youngstown	8	New York	5
Boston	7	Los Angeles	5
Toledo	7	Newark	5

In the Last Five Years How Many Priests Per Diocese Have Completed Graduate Studies? How Many Dioceses Have a Policy Regarding Graduate Studies for Diocesan Priests?

In the last five years dioceses average three priests completing graduate studies, with six diocese reporting 10 or more priests completing studies.

Fifty-two percent of the dioceses have a policy concerning priests doing further studies. Please see the open ended questions on what the policies are.

How Extensive Are the Policies for Diocesan Priests Who Become Involved in Seminary Work?

Eighty-six percent of the dioceses do not have a policy on priests becoming involved in seminary work, 81% do not set a limit on how long a priest may do seminary work, and 84% do not place a limit on how many priests may be involved in seminary training.

Major Superiors of Religious Institutes' Responses

Two hundred sixty-seven questionnaires were sent to major superiors of religious institutes with a return of 121, or 45%.

How Many Priests Do Religious Institutes Have in Seminary Work?

Thirty-two percent of the religious institutes own or conduct a seminary, and 61% have personnel in seminary work. The average is 3.0 religious priests in seminary work per institute.

Of all the institutes reporting, a total of 631 religious priests are in seminary work.

Seventy-seven percent of the institutes have priests currently pursuing graduate studies.

It should be noted that some religious institutes report contributing from 10 to 43 priests. Below are the religious institutes in this category.

Benedictines	75	Marist Brothers	13
Vincentians	55	Redemptorists	12
Dominicans	49	Sacred Heart Fathers	10
Jesuits	43	Pallottines	10
CMC	16		

N.B. These figures only represent those who replied to the study.

How Many Priests Per Religious Institute Pursue Graduate Studies?

Of the 121 religious institutes responding, a total of 297 religious priests are pursuing graduate studies. This averages to 2.5 religious priests per institute.

The subjects most studied are theology and the social sciences.

In the Last Five Years How Many Priests Per Religious Institute Have Completed Graduate Studies? How many Religious Institutes Have a Policy Regarding Graduate Studies?

In the last five years religious institutes averaged 3.4 priests receiving graduate degrees, with six institutes reporting 10 or more priests receiving degrees.

How Extensive Are the Policies for Priests Who Become Involved in Seminary Work?

Seventy percent do not have a policy on priests becoming involved in seminary work, 88% do not set a limit on how long he may do seminary work, and 96% do not place a limit on how many priests may be involved in seminary training.

Responses of the Bishops and Major Superiors of Religious Institutes to Open-Ended Questions

Questions were asked of the bishops and major superiors to encourage them to respond to seminary issues in their own words.

Do you have a policy concerning priests doing further studies? If yes, please briefly describe the policy.

Fifty-two percent of the dioceses, and 56% of religious institutes have a policy. For dioceses these policies revolve around contingencies, sabbaticals or the commitment of the diocese.

Contingencies:

Many bishops say doing further graduate studies depends on whether:

- A priest has talents and a propensity for the work.
- There is a diocesan need.
- Priests are available.
- How long a priest is ordained.
- A priest is approved by the bishop and personnel board.

Sabbaticals:

Several bishops have sabbatical policies which encourage priests to do further studies. Policies vary:

- Have a number of priests per year take a sabbatical.
- One week for all priests per year with all reimbursements covered by diocese.
- One sabbatical every 10 years.
- One diocesan priest on sabbatical every semester.
- One sabbatical of six months every seven years a man is a priest.

Commitment to further studies:

A number of bishops say they are committed to:

- Keeping one or more priests in graduate studies on a regular basis.
- Encouraging priests to attend summer programs.

Most religious institutes responding, unlike dioceses, make it a requirement that priests go on for graduate studies after ordination. These institutes have the expectation that their priests will continue their education.

When Priests Pursue Further Studies, in General How Do You Feel Other Priests React to This?

The majority of bishops, and all of the religious institutes feel that priests who pursue further studies are looked upon favorably.

A few bishops who had negative observations to make commented:

- Some priests don't feel as though they have the same opportunity (time and money) to be able to do studies in comparison with others.
- Some priests believe they are witnessing "perpetual studenthood" when certain priests go off for studies.
- Some feel that when too many go off to school at the same time the sabbatical fund is depleted.

Do You Have a Policy for Priests Becoming Involved in Seminary Work?

Only 14% of dioceses and 29% of religious institutes indicated there is a policy. The primary requirement is to have the approval of the bishop or superior.

A few bishops and religious institutes mentioned that aptitude was required as a prerequisite.

How Necessary is a Predominately Priest Faculty for Today's Seminary Training?

The majority of bishops feel a predominately priest faculty is necessary:

- For modeling priestly spirituality, commitment, celibacy, learning, priesthood, and good liturgies.
- For creating a priestly environment.
- For economic reasons.

Most religious institutes would second the above, but are less insistent that this happen at all costs.

A good number of bishops and religious institutes feel that a faculty should be mixed as long as priests are in the majority, orthodoxy is preserved, competency is guaranteed, and quality is upheld.

Both feel it is necessary to have a mixed faculty in light of fewer priests, and also because there is a need for seminarians to understand the laity.

A few bishops, and a slightly larger number of religious institutes do not feel a predominately priest faculty is necessary as long as the essentials of academic excellence and a solid spiritual formation is maintained.

Given the Number of Priests Your Diocese and Religious Institute Has, Their Size, Needs and Resources, in What Way Do You Feel You Can Best Contribute to Seminary Training in the Future?

Bishops and religious institutes both said:

- By committing a certain percentage of priests from the diocese for seminary work.
- By making a top priority the training of qualified priests.
- By prayer.
- By keeping a close relationship with the seminary.

Many religious institutes see as their charism the training of seminary personnel.

Many bishops said they want to contribute a priest or two to seminary work, but that they just don't have any to spare. Whereas religious institutes feel the contribution is an expected top priority.

Several bishops said if a priest did in fact want to teach, even though they were short, the priest would be allowed to teach if qualified.

What Do You Think Should be Done Nationally, and Now, To Provide Priests for Seminary Faculties?

A significant number of bishops and religious institutes suggest the consolidation of smaller seminaries, the development of regional seminaries, and the better sharing of personnel and resources among seminaries. Another significant number suggests establishing a national pool/clearing house of priests dedicated to seminary work. This would entail identifying seminarians who would be considered good future seminary personnel and actively recruiting present priests with qualifications.

Some bishops suggest more contact with seminaries, and support for them.

Some bishops and religious institutes feel larger dioceses must contribute more priests.

Some bishops would like to see a national plan that would make shared responsibility for seminaries a top priority.

Bishops and Religious Institutes Survey Instruments and Raw Data

Item	Description	Level	Percentage	
			Bishops	Institutes
1.	Does your diocese or religious institute have its own or conduct a seminary?	Yes	17	33
2.	Does your diocese or religious institute have personnel teaching in seminaries?	Yes	43	62
3.	Please give the number of your priests who are presently involved with seminary training.		Mean = 4.4/dioc Mean = 5.5/order	
4.	How many of your priests are currently pursuing graduate studies? (Write 0 if none)		Mean = 1.7/dioc Mean = 2.5/order	
5.	In the past 5 years how many priests have completed graduate degrees?		Mean = 3.0/dioc Mean = 3.4/order	

6. If you have priests in graduate studies please list their major areas of study.

	Numbers	
	Bishops	Institutes
Theology	25	48
Systematics	14	12
Moral Theology/Ethics	20	17
Pastoral Theology	08	03
Total Theology	67	80
Psychology, Counselling, Social Work, Anthropology	21	47
Scripture	15	24
Spirituality	13	23
Canon Law	61	15
Civil Law	00	03
Literature/English	03	18
History, Church History	08	14
Patristics	02	04
Liturgy	13	02

	Numbers	
	Bishops	*Institutes*
Philosophy	01	08
Education/Religious Education, Business & Educational Administration	15	17
Homiletics	01	01
Religion and Culture, Fine Arts, Library Science	03	05
Classics	00	01
Other	00	35
TOTAL	223	297

Religious institutes report 35 members pursuing studies in Communications, Film, Theater, Missiology, Economics, Biology, Monastic Studies, Black Studies, Mathematics, French, Japanese, Computers, and Industrial Relations.

Item	*Description*	*Level*	*Percentage*	
			Bishops	*Institutes*
7.	Does your diocese/religious institute have a policy concerning priests doing further studies?	Yes	52	56
8.	If yes, please briefly describe the policy.			
9.	When priests pursue further studies, in general how do you feel other priests react to this?			
10.	Does your diocese/religious institute have a policy for priests becoming involved in seminary work?	Yes	14	30
11.	If yes, what is required to be released for this work?			
12.	Is there a limit or stipulated time on how long priests may do seminary training?	Yes	19	11
13.	Do you place a limit on how many priests may be involved in seminary training?	Yes	15	04
14.	How necessary is a predominately priest faculty for today's seminary training? Please comment on why it is necessary, or not so necessary.			
15.	Given the number of priests your diocese/religious institute has, its size, needs and resources, in what way do you feel your diocese/religious institute can best contribute to seminary training in the future?			
16.	What do you think should be done nationally, and now, to provide priests for seminary faculties in the future?			

Study of Seminary Administrators' Experiences in Hiring Faculty

Responses of the Seminary Administrators to Open-Ended Questions

Need to model diversity within the Church—to show students there are qualified theologians who are not just priests.

If you attempted to hire new faculty, did you seek a lay person or woman religious specifically?

Yes = 10 No = 24

Please briefly describe why you sought a lay person or woman religious specifically

- We consider it valuable to have a woman on the formation staff to provide a feminine perspective and to help us to be sensitive to women's concerns.
- Need to model diversity within the church—to show students there are qualified theologians who are not *just* priests. To offer another perspective.
- We wanted women's experience and their perspective both in and out of the classroom.
- Better balance and representation on faculty.
- To diversify our faculty.
- Wish to hire more women.
- We want both lay and/or female well represented in our department.
- Actively sought women religious and lay people to bring diversity to the faculty.
- Model collaboration in ministry.
- Area more proper to lay minister/religious.
- Better qualifications.
- NO. We are a diocesan seminary and the bishop cooperated in providing one of the persons we asked for in both positions. It isn't always this successful.
- YES, in a particular case. Predecessor was a religious woman. Sensitive to faculty balance a needs of students for diversity.

If you are in a position to hire new faculty for 1992-93, will you change your search process in any way?

Yes = 3 No = 30

Do you have written policies/guidelines for hiring a new faculty?

Yes = 17 No = 14

Please describe briefly what your search process is and how you will change it.

- We have used reputable journals and papers to place ads; have contacted universities and have made personal inquiries. If there is more to be done would like to learn about other methods.
- The search committees have three faculty members (reduction by one), one faculty member from another school in the consortium, and one student (not students on previous committee). The "outside" faculty member will be more involved in selection of candidates for interview than previously.
- First we contact the religious communities which sponsor the school, then we advertize the positions.
- We advertise widely and use national magazines. We may try more informal contract.
- Process is good. Need to start process earlier.
- Prefer personal contact/inquiry rather than advertising.
- More extensive advertising.

If you lost faculty in the last two years, what generally were the reasons for departure?

- Retirement was most often cited (ten times) as the reason for faculty departures.
- Job offers at universities, both Catholic and secular led to nine departures.
- Return to parochial ministry produced the same number of departures, nine.
- Transfers within religious community, including promotions to administration was cited eight times.

- Negative review and termination as a result of internal processes occasioned six departures.
- Resignation from priesthood led to four departures.
- Assignment to a diocesan position resulted in four departures.
- Voluntary resignation linked to the end of a term/contract produced three departures.

Other responses were:

- Preaching/Homiletics: He felt that he had reached the point where he no longer had the full support of the administration.
- Moral Theology: She gave us no reason for the resignation. But the fact that she was not recommended for promotion and sabbatical was a significant factor.
- Seminary formation too demanding.
- Change in organizational structure.
- One priest was suffering from his previous "workaholic" schedule and became sick after being assigned here—it caught up with him.
- One religious sister did not want to serve were she could not be spiritual director for seminarians.
- One person left because of a felt lack of colleagueship in the school and in the consortium; the other left for an administrative position which enabled him to be closer to his family.
- One professor had not finished his doctorate in the two years provided, he also sought greater financial security. Incompatibility with other faculty and with church teaching authority in seminary training.
- Desire to return to Canadian home.
- One faculty member accepted a position in the United States; he felt he needed a change after 10 years in Toronto.
- We will have several retirements in the 1990's, as an aging faculty comes to age 65. Some are planning to stay on part-time at partial salary, which our college encourages because of financial pressures, shortage in number of points available for assignment.
- Finishing terminal degree.

Please add any further comments you feel appropriate on the hiring of future faculty.

- At least at the Toronto school of theology, we seven members of the consortium and the TST itself, are all coming to a new financial crunch, akin to the one which helped prompt the federation in 1969. The recession will force us to further rationalize hiring, cut the number of positions. Work loads will increase for those lucky enough to find work.
- It is very difficult to find qualified priests to teach in seminaries. We should find some way by which we can identify priests who are qualified and willing to teach in seminaries.
- The challenge is to achieve the right balance on the faculty. And to balance the budget!
- The decreasing pool of priests and financial burden of hiring lay faculty will be a problem.
- We have found it very difficult to identify qualified persons seeking openings. The response to advertising in local and national publications does not yield quick responses. Prior notice and patience are demanded.
- Our process needs to be intensive but informal. We are looking for a very specialized person. A general want ad seems to create more difficulty than paying careful attention to informal loads.
- Bishops must allow priests to track outside of diocese when qualified individuals applied. In two cases we hired the one and only individual with good qualifications who applied. We just looked out.
- Presently all permanent, full-time faculty are Roman Catholic religious. In the future we will seek to hire more lay faculty, especially faculty who are of Hispanic origin. In regard to affirmative action, we are trying to build a cluster of Hispanics on the faculty rather than seeking other ethnic or racial minority groups (although we would be delighted to have a more racially diverse faculty).
- Hiring teaching faculty has not been too difficult. Occasionally bishops are reluctant to release a priest. When a priest is released we must send him to school to become academically qualified. Generally, priests are not too enthusiastic about returning to the seminary, undertaking graduate studies, and serving in a seminary setting.
- If bishops really believe what they write about the vital importance of seminary formation, they should be more willing to release their priests for a five year term of service in seminaries.
- The pool of qualified people in decreasing fewer seminaries with stronger academic programs would enable better formation.

- A need to encourage diocesan bishops *to listen* to requests for priests to study for advanced degrees. There is a need for people trained other than as canon lawyers.
- Although we are blessed by the support of a cooperative and understanding bishop, the signs indicate that this situation will become increasingly problematic as the number of priests declines. So far, we have not had problems hiring faculty.
- It is becoming more and more difficult because of the image of seminaries as academically closed institutions, Many perceive seminaries as places of indoctrination centers. The requirement that qualified professors be ordained priests is burdensome.
- Most replacements and additions were part of a faculty renewal plan.
- There is a smaller pool of future faculty.
- Bishops seem reluctant to release people for seminary work.
- The challenge of finding male religious faculty for an institution such as CTU will become increasingly difficult.
- Looking for more ethnic representation, specifically Hispanic and Black. Persons who are capable of adult models of learning.
- In the last five years I have had great trouble in hiring. Turned down by bishops in several cases. This last time I was fortunate that the society had someone to send because one of our other houses closed.

Seminary Administrators Survey Instrument and Raw Data

Fifty-six (56) major theologates were surveyed and 38 or 68% responded. Three (3) theologates responded they were not attempting to hire anyone.

Within the last 2 years in which areas of study did you attempt to hire new faculty, or replace them?

TABLE 1

Field	*Number of*	
	New Positions	*Replacements*
1. Old Testament Studies	1	13
2. New Testament Studies	3	8
3. Systematic/Dogmatic Theology	8	15
4. Moral Theology	3	11
5. Liturgy/Sacraments	1	6
6. Preaching/Homiletics	3	12
7. Pastoral Counseling	4	2
8. Spirituality	2	1
9. Church History	1	4
10. Canon Law	1	3
11. Field Education/Supervised Ministry	3	13
12. Spiritual Formation Faculty	3	8
13. Other	6	7
TOTAL	39	103
= 142 New Positions or Replacements		

When divided by the 38 seminaries that replied, we have an average 3.7 new positions or replacements per seminary every 2 years.

Table 2 represents the number and type of persons that were sought when seminaries attempt to fill new positions or replace a person for a position.

A. Diocesan priest
B. Religious order priest
C. Religious sister/brother
D. Lay woman
E. Lay man
F. Vocational status was not a consideration
G. Preference given to ordained candidates, but open to all
H. Other

TABLE 2

	A.	*B.*	*C.*	*D.*	*E.*	*F.*	*G.*	*H.*
O.T. Studies	0	2	0	0	0	3	1	0
N.T. Studies	4	2	0	0	0	2	2	0
Dogmatic Theology	2	2	0	1	0	3	6	1
Moral	2	1	0	0	0	3	4	1
Liturgy/SC	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	0
Homiletics	4	2	0	0	0	2	6	0
Pastoral Counseling	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0
Spirituality	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Church History	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0
Canon Law	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Field Ed	4	0	2	1	0	4	3	0
Spiritual Formation Faculty	5	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
Other	3	1	0	0	0	2	1	1
TOTALS	28	15	5	6	5	34	38	11

Table 3 indicates the ease/difficulties Seminary Administrators had in hiring for the position indicated below.

A. Hired person with desired qualifications
B. Hired qualified person, not exactly what was desired
C. Unable to hire person, left position open
D. Unable to hire person and will use part-time faculty
E. Other

TABLE 3

	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.
O.T. Studies	7	1	0	1	0
N.T. Studies	6	1	0	1	1
Dogmatic Theology	12	0	1	1	1
Moral	5	2	0	2	1
Liturgy/SC	2	0	2	2	0
Homiletics	3	5	4	2	0
Counseling	1	3	0	0	0
Spirituality	3	0	0	0	0
Church History	2	0	1	2	0
Canon Law	1	0	0	0	0
Field Ed	12	4	0	0	0
Spiritual Formation Faculty	7	0	0	0	0
Other	3	1	0	0	0
TOTALS	64	17	8	11	3

Table 4 indicates the ease/difficulties Seminary Administrators had in hiring the person(s) they wanted.

A. No difficulty
B. Bishop/superior would not release person
C. Lack of qualified candidates applying
D. Salary too low
E. Too many formation responsibilities required
F. Person required to live on campus
G. Publishing requirement too stringent
H. Research opportunities too limited
I. Opening occurred too late to conduct proper search
J. Reluctance of priests to leave parochial ministry
K. Other

TABLE 4

	A.	*B.*	*C.*	*D.*	*E.*	*F.*	*G.*	*H.*	*I.*	*J.*	*K.*
O.T. Studies	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
N.T. Studies	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Dogmatic Theology	11	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Moral	7	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Liturgy/SC	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Homiletics	2	0	5	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Counseling	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Spirituality	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Church History	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Canon Law	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Field Ed	6	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Spiritual Formation Faculty	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Other	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
TOTALS	52	4	16	6	1	0	0	0	8	2	1

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